

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 remain in the application. Claims 2, 5, 7, 9 and 10 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Claims 1 and 7 have been withdrawn from consideration. Of the claims under consideration, Claims 2, 9 and 10 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Initially, with regard to Claim 7, Applicants believe that allowance of Claim 6, from which it depends, will entitle Applicants to re-joinder of Claim 7, since at that point no issues apart from any possible formal ones will exist with regard to Claim 7. Moreover, Applicants do not agree with the Examiner that Claims 1 and 7 are similar. Accordingly, Applicants request that, at such time as Claim 6 is allowed, Claim 7 is rejoined and passed to issue, as well.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. In response, that claim has been amended to recite a storage medium which computer-readably stores the program. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection of Claim 10 is respectfully requested.

Also, Claims 2-6, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,982,990 (Gondek).

Independent Claim 2 is directed to an image processing method that creates a table of an image formation apparatus for performing an image formation using plural coloring agents having different densities for the same color. In the method of Claim 2, a first line from black to white is defined, and plural second lines from white to a primary color and a secondary color are defined. In addition, plural third lines from the primary color and the secondary color to black are defined, and the table is created according to the first line, the second lines and the third lines. According to Claim 2, a start of dyeing

coloring agent (i.e., the point at which a transition is made from using only a lower-density dye to a higher-density dye of the same hue) is controlled by a user independently with respect to each of the first line, the second lines and the third lines.

Gondek relates to a system which uses multiple densities of both cyan and magenta inks in an effort to improve the quality of printing obtained using a digital color printer. *Gondek* approaches this problem by providing a system for converting from what he terms a “near-analog color space” (see col. 2, lines 1-4, and col. 3, lines 6-8), i.d., a color space like that of a CRT, which produces gradations that are sufficiently close together to appear continuous to the human eye, into the output color space of a printer. *Gondek* specifies that at least one color in the output color space has at least two output options, e.g., different densities of colorant of the same hue. *Gondek* provides a set of control points in the near-analog color space, which are used to define points of transition between the mentioned two options. Also, interpolation is performed within the near-analog color space between the control points. In this fashion, *Gondek* aims to avoid the effects of the non-linearity of the transformation from a CRT color space to the printer color space.

Even if *Gondek* is read as determining the point at which dyeing using the darker ink is begun, with respect to a first line from black to white, plural second lines from white to the primary color and the secondary color, and plural third lines from the primary color and the secondary color to black, however, nothing has been found in that patent that would teach or suggest any arrangement in which “a start of dyeing coloring agent is controlled by a user independently with respect to each of the first line, the second lines and the third lines”, as recited in Claim 2. Without that feature, the *Gondek* approach does not enable one to achieve the effect of the method of Claim 2 that, for example, the

dyeing points of dark cyan and dark magenta ink can be controlled in such a manner that the dark ink dyeing points can be three-dimensionally and sequentially controlled as desired. As illustrated in the present application, such control may be effected by the seven points on the lines W-Bk, W-C, M, Y, R, G and B-Bk (see Fig. 21). For at least that reason, it is believed clear that Claim 2 is allowable over *Gondek*.

Independent Claims 9 and 10 are respectively an apparatus claim and a storage medium claim corresponding to method Claim 2, and are both deemed allowable over *Gondek* at least by virtue of the arguments presented above with regard to Claim 2.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as a reference against the independent claims under consideration herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

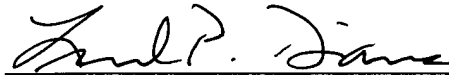
The other rejected claims in this application are each dependent from independent Claim 2 discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In addition, since Claim 6 is deemed to be allowable, the rejoinder and allowance of Claim 7 is also requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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